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# *Tony Twiddler; His Tale*

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This BOOK  
BELONGS TO

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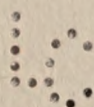
TONY TWIDDLER STOOD AWAITING THE ARRIVAL  
OF HIS CUSTOMERS.

*(Frontispiece)*



# TONY TWIDDLER HIS TALE

BY  
ALAN WRIGHT



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## TONY TWIDDLER—

### HIS TALE

**T**ONY TWIDDLER stood at the door of his Inn awaiting the arrival of his customers. "It's a very nice evening," said Tony to himself, "a very nice evening indeed." Then Tony took a good puff at his long clay pipe, and then he looked up and down the street—it was Lady Cake Lane and not very long—and then he





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

stared straight across at the house over the way. Tony Twiddler was a very good-hearted little fellow, short and round, as all Innkeepers should be. He was merry, and fond of good things, very generous to the poor, and so everybody liked Tony. The men Micefolk came in the evenings to drink his gooseberry beer and talk over the happenings of the day in Miceland, or read in their paper, "*The Miceland Times*," wonderful stories of foreign lands.

Tony's Inn, which he proudly called *The Cheese Hotel*, was famous all over Miceland, and nobody could cook











TO BE SURE IT WAS EXACTLY RIGHT, SHE TOOK  
A GOODLY TASTE.

(see page 4)



## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

Cheese Soup, Apple Fritters, and Cheesecakes so beautifully as Mrs. Tony Twiddler.

While Tony enjoyed the evening air at his door, Mrs. Twiddler was busy in her nice, old-fashioned kitchen making a big pot of Cheese Soup. Tomorrow would be market day, and what farmer would think of going to market and not having his dinner at the Cheese Hotel, and taking a dish of the famous Soup? Farmer Hedgehog and Policeman Badger were very fond of it, and it was not safe to put a big bowl full of it before them, although they were not very greedy persons.





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

So Mrs. Tony made her Soup in the old kitchen; and, to be sure it *was* exactly right, she took a good big taste of it, and nearly burnt her tongue—it was so very hot. Then, to be sure she had not made any mistake about it, she took another rather large taste and smiled. “It’s very fine Soup,” said Mrs. Tony Twiddler. She put the Soup into a big dish and set it in the Pantry where the newly made Cheesecakes and Apple Fritters made a delightful show upon the shelf.

Then, well pleased with her work, she went to see about Tony’s supper.











THE CHARMING MISS TWIDDLERS SAT IN THE  
BEST PARLOR SEWING SAMPLERS. *(see page 5)*



## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

The charming Miss Twiddlers sat in the best parlor sewing samplers. When the samplers were finished they intended to make a pair of wool slippers for Pa Twiddler's birthday. They made Pa very anxious, because they would keep staring at his feet and whispering together in corners, and taking measures of his old slippers, till poor Pa Tony began to fear there was something very wrong with his feet.

Tony rather spoiled his two daughters. He would buy candy from Mr. Jam, the grocer and candy-man, and sometimes even presents of lovely jewelry from Mr. Mole, the pedlar,





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

who often had beautiful diamonds and emeralds from the broken green and white bottles which he found along the way.

Wasn't it strange we should be talking of Pedlar Mole, for he was just coming around the corner of Lady Cake Lane, teased by some naughty Miceboys?

Good Tony Twiddler soon sent them hurrying away, and old Pedlar Mole was not long in getting to business. He tried to sell Tony a red pocket book, which Tony did not want, but, being kind hearted, to make up for saying No, he invited old Mole into







OLD GRANFER WHITEMOUSE LISTENED TO TALES  
OF EXCITING ADVENTURES.

(see page 8)







## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

the Parlor to have a glass of gooseberry beer.

When they were settled before the fire, and Mrs. Tony had brought Mole some of her wonderful cakes, no one was happier than the old pedlar.

Old Granfer Whitemouse, who sat in the corner by the fire, listened to tales of exciting adventures at back doors with farmers' wives, and yard-dogs. When Granfer tried to tell a story beginning, "When I was young," which he did very many times, old Mole kept right on talking, so poor old Granfer never did tell his story.





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

He exclaimed at the tales Mole told, and cried "Wonderful!" or "Bless us now!" when Mole stopped to take breath, or a sup of gooseberry beer, while Tony sat and listened, and smiled and puffed his pipe.

As time went on, the Workmice and other Micefolk began to arrive at the Inn. With them came a wandering fiddler, and soon the sound of music and laughter was heard. After a while Tiny Squeaker, a young mouse, was persuaded to sing. The fiddler helped him with his fiddle, and Squeaker sang at the top of his voice:











TINY SQUEAKER WAS PERSUADED TO SING.

(see page 10)



## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

“Cats don’t know when it’s  
Half-past eight,  
So meet me at the Cheese,  
And don’t be late.”

This was a favorite old mouse song, and if you could hear the other verses I think you would like it too.

When the song was finished the folks would buy the fiddler a glass of gooseberry beer and a slice of bacon rind, and sometimes Mrs. Twiddler would bring Tiny Squeaker a Cheese-cake. That was why Tiny always sang as loud as ever he could so that she might hear him.





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

But, alas! while all this fun was going on at the Hotel, up the Lane, two very bad neighbors were planning harm to poor old Mole, and to Tony Twiddler too.

Do you wish to know who these bad neighbors were? One was Wicked Weasel, and the other was Rover Rat; and you had only to see them to know at once how very bad they were. Little did the good, happy Micefolk at the Inn think what was being planned for them; and, but for Hodgie and Stodgie Vole, worse might have happened.





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

Hodgie and Stodgie Vole were two village Miceboys, and they had been scaring flies on Hambone Hill all day. They were coming back to the village and home very tired when they heard strange whisperings at the corner of Cat Alley Lane, about a hundred tails from the village. They crept quietly, oh so quietly, to the root of a big tree and peeped over; and there, to their horror, they saw the two bad ones talking together. Hodgie and Stodgie were too frightened to move, and so they overheard the wicked plan.

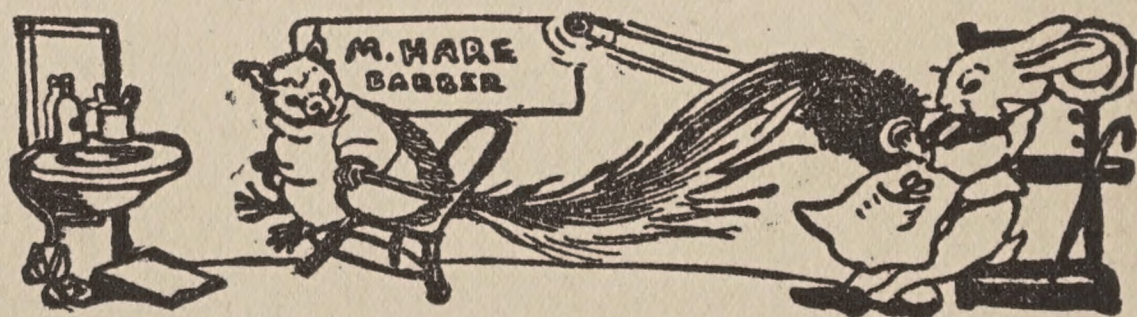




## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

But before I tell you about the plan I must tell what happened to poor Pedlar Mole. When the time came to close the Inn, and the Mice-folk had had their last gossip by the door, Pedlar Mole, with his basket on his back, had set out very cheerfully for his lodgings in the next village. Of course, being a mole, the darkness suited his sight, which was very bad by day. So, though he was not nervous, he kept a sharp eye about him and hummed the songs he had heard at the Inn. Just as he reached the end of Cat Alley Lane, he began:

“Cats don’t know when it’s  
Half-past eight—”







WEASEL EXAMINED THE DARK LANTERN  
CAREFULLY.

(see page 15)







## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

when from behind a tree stepped Wicked Weasel, and said roughly: "No, but weasels do." Then he seized poor Mole and made him go on his knees and open his pack, which Wicked Weasel ransacked and helped himself to some of the best diamonds; but what he really wanted was the dark lantern which Mole had tried to sell for ever so long—seventeen days or more—I believe. Weasel examined it carefully, and looked inside to see that there was a piece of candle. Then he stuffed it into his pocket, and sent poor old Pedlar Mole on his way again with a kick





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

and a rough promise to pay him when Mole could speak double Dutch. That is why, ever since, Mole has been asking every odd-looking mouse, or other animal he meets, if he is a double Dutchman. Because he says he means to learn double Dutch some day, and get his money for the lantern from Wicked Weasel.

Now let us hurry back to Hodgie and Stodgie. When poor old Mole had gone, Wicked Weasel went to the end of the lane and met Rover Rat and showed him the lantern. "A fine lantern for our job," laughed Rat. "We'll soon be in old Twiddler's





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

pantry, and we'll pick it pretty clean too."

Then they began to arrange how it was to be done; and it was just at this moment Hodgie and Stodgie peeped at them and heard their plans. But it was not till Weasel and Rat had gone a good way from them that they recovered from their fright enough to run. Who should they tell? What should they do?

"Let's go to Farmer Hedgehog," said Stodgie, "He'll be after them."

And so they ran, and tumbled, and scrambled, all the way to Farmer Hedgehog.





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

Farmer Hedgehog had just finished his tea, and had made himself comfortable in his armchair with his handkerchief over his head to keep away "those nasty flies," when, Bang! Bang-bang! went the front door knocker. In a moment Farmer Hedgehog was wide awake. He snatched the handkerchief from his head, bounced from his chair, and dashed to the front door muttering and grumbling, "*I'll* give it to them! Where's my stick? Where's the lantern?" In one second he had snatched the hall lantern from its hook and his stick from its corner, and flung open











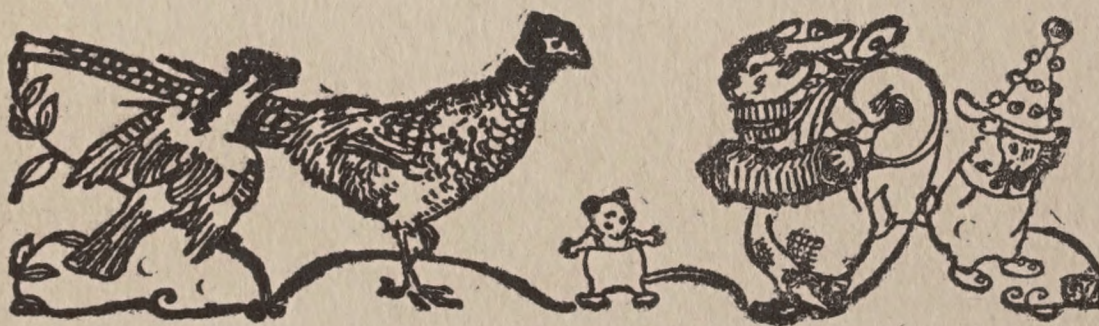
THERE, UNDER HIS VERY NOSE, STOOD POOR  
LITTLE HODGIE AND STODGIE VOLE. (see page 19)



## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

the front door, and there, right under his very nose, stood poor little Hodgie and Stodgie Vole. How frightened they were, but they were also plucky Micekins and did not run away, but in a very shaky voice Hodgie squeaked as he touched his hat, "Please, sir; please, sir," and then with many stumblings and repeatings they told Farmer Hedgehog all they had seen and heard.

When they had told their story, Farmer Hedgehog said, "Wait a moment, I must get on my shoes, and get my gun," and then he rushed to the door only to rush back to say,





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

“Look here, boys. Do you know where Policeman Badger lives? Just run over to his house and tell him what you’ve told me; and say I’m coming with my gun. Now then, be off, quick.”

Hodgie and Stodgie thought of those two wicked ones and their hearts trembled, but they were ashamed to be afraid, and so, plucking up their courage and saying very bravely, “Right, sir, we’ll do it,” they very slowly started off into the dark night. But, once outside, how they did run! They knew all the lanes and short





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

cuts, and dashed along keeping a bright lookout as they went.

Tony Twiddler had had his supper with his family and enjoyed some of the lovely Cheese Soup, and a fresh Apple Fritter or two, and a pipe with his last cup of tea; and Mrs. Tony and the lovely Miss Twiddlers had gone to bed.

“Well,” said Tony to himself, “it has been a very pleasant day. And what an amusing old fellow Pedlar Mole is,” and he laughed at the memory of the wonderful stories of farmers’ wives and yard-dogs he had heard. “But it’s been a very tiring day too,





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

and I think I had better get to bed and have a good night's rest, or I shan't be fit for market day tomorrow." So he put out all the lights, and lit his bedroom candle, and went around the house to see if it was all properly locked up, just as he did every night of his life. Then, yawning very much, he climbed the old stairs to his room. He was not long getting into his night clothes, and he put a nightlight in a basin on the floor, so that he might be able to get up quickly if any poor traveller called during the midnight hours.

Good Tony Twiddler yawned as he climbed into his comfy old four-







GOOD TONY TWIDDLER YAWNED AS HE CLIMBED  
INTO HIS COMFY OLD FOUR-POST BED. (see page 24)







## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

post bed, and his head no sooner touched the pillow than he was sound asleep.

After a time he began to dream of old Pedlar Mole. Then he dreamed that a farmer's wife was barking at him, and then that a yard-dog wanted to buy a red pocket book, and old Granfer Whitemouse would keep telling the yard-dog a very long story, all about "When I was a boy," and a farmer's wife who cut short tails with a carving knife, but never seemed able to cut short Granfer's tale, which went on, and on, and on, and on, till poor Tony got quite annoyed. Just





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

as he was thinking Granfer never would stop, the farmer's wife barked with a great big *Bang!* and Tony sat up in bed in great alarm and said, "*What's that?*" But as there was no one there to answer him I can't tell you what it was, but perhaps we shall find out if we go on with the story.

Farmer Hedgehog took down his gun from its nail where it always hung, with a label under it to tell it was "loaded." Clapping on his hat he marched off to *The Cheese*, calling the other Micefolk as he went to join in the rescue of good Mr. Twiddler.

Policeman Badger, as soon as he had learned from Hodgie and Stodgie











POLICEMAN BADGER SEIZED HIS STOUT STICK  
AND STARTED IN GREAT HASTE. *(see page 26)*



## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

of the wicked ones' evil plans, seized his stout stick and started in great haste for the Inn, rousing the Field Mice as he went.

But what were the two wicked ones doing all this time? You know how Hodgie and Stodgie overheard their plan. When Wicked Weasel and Rover Rat had finished their plan, they went off home together and had their supper; but there was little for them to eat, and they looked forward to the time when they would have Cheese Soup and Apple Fritters in plenty. Supper over, Weasel lit his lantern and Rover Rat tied a black





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

mask over his evil face, making him look, if possible, more wicked than ever. Then picking up their rough sticks they started out.

The village had all gone to bed; and soon they were stealing along Lady Cake Lane to *The Cheese*. Weasel flashed his lantern on the key-hole, and they both carefully examined the door.

"Too strong for us, I fear," snarled Rat.

"We'll have to gnaw through the wall," whispered Weasel.

So they set to work—Rat, who was good at gnawing, taking the bigger





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

share of the work. For a long time you could hear nothing but the scraping noise of Rat's teeth.

The wall was of a very thick and hard cheese, but after a time Rat said it was getting thin, and then suddenly there was a tiny hole.

"Go to it," cried Weasel in a hoarse whisper. "Good old Rat!" And they worked harder than ever, and the hole grew bigger and bigger. At last they were through.

"Quick!" whispered Weasel, "this way to the pantry." They crept along the hall, now down a step, now up two, and now round a corner, and





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

now through a low doorway, for it was a very old house, and you would have loved to play hide and seek in it—such nice little dark corners and crannies behind doors or under stairways; but Wicked Weasel and Rover Rat did not think of such pleasant games, for they were very bad indeed.

Presently Weasel turned his lantern on a little low door with a window in it, and a white curtain behind the window. Carefully, very, very carefully, he opened the little door, and there right before them lay the pantry; and such a delicious smell met them—a smell of hot cakes and burnt bacon





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

rind, and Cheese and Apple Sauce, and Pastry and Gooseberry Beer and Jam—such a smell as makes a mouse feel hungry all over again directly after his dinner.

Weasel and Rat put their hands on their stomachs and their mouths watered, and they licked their lips and crept softly in and shut the little door.

“Here you are,” grinned Weasel. “Cheesecakes, all hot, all hot! Fill your pockets, Rat.”

“No charge, no charge!” laughed Rat. “Good old Twiddler! Send in the bill, Twiddy, to Willie Weasel;” and those two wicked ones giggled





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

and hunted about till Weasel suddenly cried, "Cheese Soup!"

"Huh," said Rat, "can't pocket *that*, better eat it now;" and they gulped it down in great spoonfuls until it was all gone. Then they crammed Cheesecakes and Apple Fritters into their pockets. Suddenly Weasel stopped, and Rat cocked his big ears.

"Footsteps!" He looked hurriedly round.

They opened the window and looked out. It was very dark, but far away they heard the patter of hurrying feet.





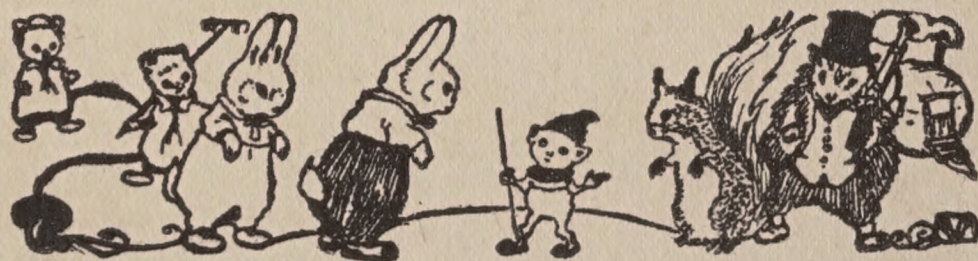
## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

Yes, the feet were coming that way. Then Weasel listened again.

"It's Micefolk," he said, "and I hear old Prickleback's voice too." "Old Prickleback" was his rude name for Farmer Hedgehog. Then they both turned very pale.

"They're coming up Lady Cake Lane, and we must get out of this double quick," whispered Rat, and they both made for the little window.

Policeman Badger and Farmer Hedgehog, each with a following of Field Mice, reached the village and made quietly for Lady Cake Lane. Stopping in front of *The Cheese*





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

*Hotel*, they examined the windows and door. All seemed safe, till presently a mouse in a long blue coat—I think it was Mr. Scraper, the Church Mouse—held up a lantern and cried out: “Here’s where they’ve got in;” and sure enough he had found the large hole Rat had gnawed in the wall.

Badger and Hedgehog both examined it carefully. It was too small for either of them to get through.

“Now,” said Badger, turning to the crowd of Micefolk, “one or two of you boys get through and find out what those two villains are up to.”





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

But the Micefolk hung back; they did not at all like the idea of facing two such desperate characters in the dark halls of the Inn.

“Look here, then,” said Farmer Hedgehog, “the only thing to do is for you, Badger, to watch here, and I’ll run around Cat Alley and see if there are any signs of them at the back.” And at once he set off around the corner into the Alley. Hardly had he gone a tail when he saw Wicked Weasel and Rover Rat, who had squeezed through the little pantry window, running up the Alley. In a moment Farmer Hedgehog brought





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

his gun to his shoulder and shouted at the top of his voice: "Stop! Stop, you thieves, or I'll shoot!" But the thieves paid no attention, but ran the faster for Slip Away Alley. The next instant Farmer Hedgehog fired, and there was a huge, tremendous *Bang!* And it was this huge, tremendous *Bang* which woke Tony Twiddler, and made him ask the nightlight, "*What's That?*"

For a moment Tony sat staring and listening, then he thought he heard voices and footsteps under his window, and he jumped out of bed, slipped on his coat and slippers, and,







FARMER HEDGEHOG FIRED, AND THERE WAS A  
HUGE TREMENDOUS BANG!

(see page 37)







## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

opening his window, thrust out his head. As he did so he heard Policeman Badger's voice calling gruffly: "Have you caught them, Hedgehog?"

The Micefolk were all hurrying around Cat Alley corner, and lanterns and the unpleasant ends of pitchforks and spades met Tony's wondering gaze.

"What's the matter?" he shouted.

Some Micefolk looked up. "The wicked ones have been getting into your Cheese," they shouted back. "Come down and see."

"Are they inside now?" he asked, casting a nervous glance over his

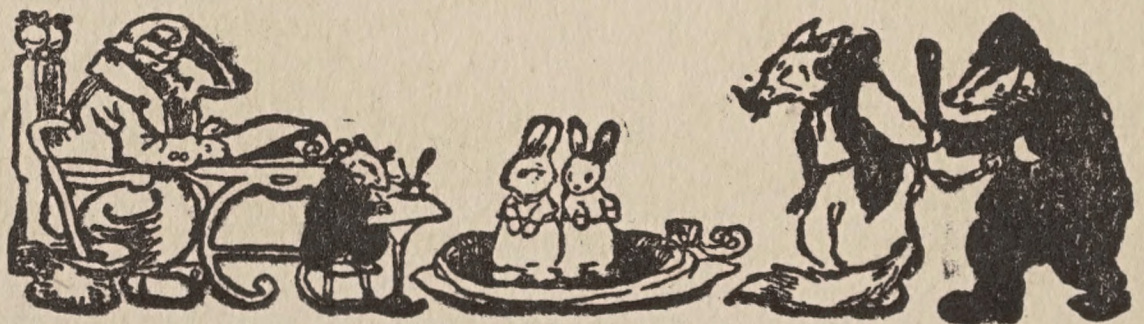




## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

shoulder into the room behind him. Satisfied that the villains had fled, he boldly lit his candle and hurried downstairs, unlocked the door, and threw it open, just as Farmer Hedgehog returned with Policeman Badger and the crowd from Cat Alley. Farmer Hedgehog was explaining to everybody in a disappointed voice that he had missed the thieves because he had forgotten to put the bullets into his gun.

Good little Tony Twiddler was very glad they were not shot, even when Mrs. Tony came bustling along to tell him those two wicked ones had





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

eaten all her nice Cheese Soup and carried off all the Apple Fritters and Cheesecakes.

“Never mind, never mind,” she gasped. “I will soon make more. You shall not be disappointed today, Mr. Policeman,” she said, addressing Badger; “nor you, Mr. Hedgehog. Soon make more, soon make more,” and she gasped again and waddled off, a very queer little figure in her nightcap and wrap and all sorts of shawls.

“Poor fellows!” said Tony. “But why not come and ask for the food in the proper way! Of course I’d





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

have given them some. Not all, perhaps—not all—but plenty. Dear, dear! Poor fellows!” Then he insisted everybody must come in and have some Gooseberry Beer and whatever food they could hunt up. So in they all trooped, and Tony was quite happy running around with the Gooseberry Beer jug and filling up everybody’s glass. Everyone chattered about the wonderful happenings, and Farmer Hedgehog, still excited and full of explanations about the missing bullets, waved his glass about and spilt the good Gooseberry Beer everywhere he went. Good little Tony







EVERYONE CHATTERED ABOUT THE WONDERFUL  
HAPPENINGS.

(see page 42)







## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

laughed and said, "Poor fellows! Poor fellows!" to everybody; and everybody stared at Tony and declared he had a heart of gold. Indeed he had a heart of much better stuff—a heart of good, warm kindness and forgiveness.

Mrs. Tony waddled in every now and then with all the goodies she could find, and said, "Never mind! never mind; soon make more, soon make more," until all the Micefolk declared there never had been such a kindly couple in all the world before.

But Wicked Weasel and Rover Rat fled far and fast up Cat Alley





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

Lane, and at last found a very snug corner in the long grass, where grew a large mushroom. There they emptied their pockets and seated themselves to the stolen feast with great merriment. Weasel made such sly fun of old Prickleback's shooting and the cost of bullets, that Rat could hardly eat his cakes for laughing.

But the wicked never really escape punishment, and so it came about that after these two very wicked ones had eaten all the Cakes and Fritters, they threw themselves down in the grass to sleep. While they were asleep and snoring, with their mouths wide open,







SEATED THEMSELVES TO THE FEAST WITH GREAT  
MERRIMENT. (see page 44)



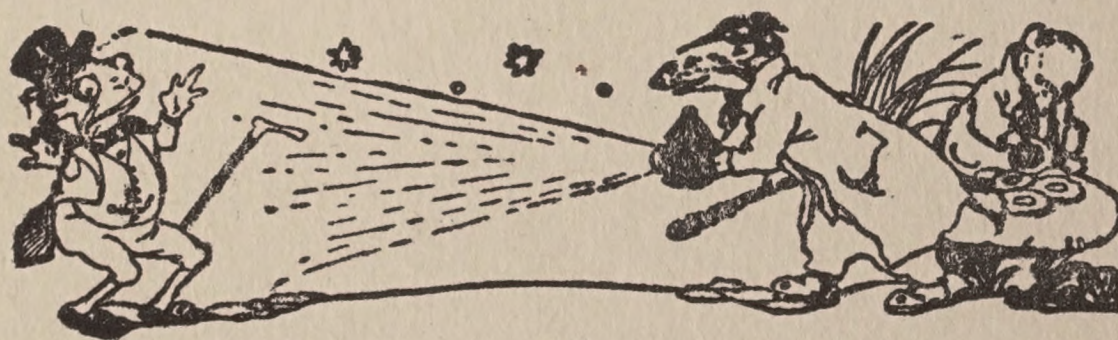




## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

two horrible Pains, looking for a couple of likely resting places, came along that way. Seeing Weasel's and Rat's mouths wide open, they grinned at each other, and without a word or a sound just slipped in, and, oh! what a horrible time Rat and Weasel had when they awoke, and of course they wished they had not eaten all those Cakes and Fritters, and gobbled all that Soup.

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" they moaned. "Oh, Pains, do go away!" But the Pains didn't go away until they were well rested, and that was not until the next day.





## TONY TWIDDLER—HIS TALE

As for the Twiddlers, they were as happy as could be, and all the Mice-folk came in crowds to "*The Cheese*" in the evenings and were very merry. Plasterers came and cheesed up the hole in the wall, and made it stronger than ever, and to this day, if you drop into "*The Cheese*" for a glass of Gooseberry Beer and a Fritter or Cheesecake, you may hear the Mice-folk still telling to visitors Tony Twiddler's Wonderful Tale.































N. B.

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BELONGS TO

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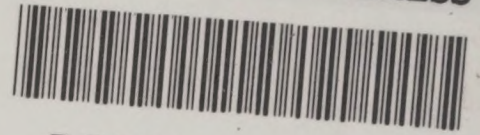
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